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ABSTRACT

The 1994-95 school year was the first year of the MECA (Manufacturing, Engineering, Construction, Automotive) partnership implementation in the Saginaw (Michigan) Public Schools. MECA's purpose was to nurture the potential of youth while placing them in workplace environments that had not been a traditional part of applied learning in secondary and postsecondary contexts. A survey of 12 employers participating in MECA was conducted to determine how the process of program initiation was proceeding. It focused on six areas: initial contact; assistance received; training received; Career Opportunities Center (COC) responsiveness; MECA involvement; and strengths, weaknesses, and unanticipated outcomes of the program. All 12 respondents said that their company staff identified workplace mentors; 9 reported participation in mentor training; and 10 considered the assistance provided to be the best type for them as employers. All respondents reported participation in inservice activities; four indicated they were helpful. Eleven confirmed that COC staff responded quickly or in a reasonable amount of time. Eleven reported they were comfortable with their level of involvement in MECA. Respondents mentioned a wide variety of strengths and weaknesses. Two strengths were mentioned more than once: students participating by choice and cooperation of school/instructors. (Appendixes include survey instruments and responses.) (YLB)

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ED 389 941

EVALUATION REPORT

SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES
EMPLOYER SURVEY RESULTS

1994-95

DEPARTMENT OF EVALUATION SERVICES

- PROVIDING ASSESSMENT, PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RESEARCH SERVICES -

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SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF SAGINAW

Saginaw, Michigan

CE070510

SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES
EMPLOYER SURVEY RESULTS

1994-95

An Approved Report of the
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December, 1995

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Introduction

The School District of the City of Saginaw's Averill Career Opportunities Center (COC)[1] has created a partnership with business and labor to prepare better young adults for the high performance demands of today's workplace. The MECA (Manufacturing, Engineering, Construction, Automotive) partnership is a comprehensive collaborative approach to a school-to-work system funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. Its purpose is to nurture the potential of youth while placing them in workplace environments that have not been a traditional part of applied learning in secondary and post-secondary contexts.

MECA integrates and improves on the best elements of current state and federal model school-to-work programs. The partnership connects student personal interest in careers and vocations to a hands-on and minds-engaged educational approach that will lead to high-skill, high-wage careers. The MECA initiative matches its processes to the current State of Michigan directions for school-to-work opportunities. Perhaps most importantly, the MECA school-to-work initiative offers tremendous potential for successful local growth and infusion across a wide cross-section of classrooms and worksites in both the industrial and human service realms.

The 1994-95 school year is the first year of MECA implementation. Surveys of students, employers, and faculty were conducted to determine how the process of program initiation was proceeding.

---

[1] As of the start of the 1995-96 school year the Averill Career Opportunities Center (COC) is now known as the Saginaw Career Complex.

This report deals specifically with the survey of employers (sometimes referred to as partners). Two other reports published under separate covers present survey results specific to students and faculty.

Procedures

A total of 26 employers were identified as participating in the MECA partnership. During the week of June 5-9, 1995, they were sent a copy of the 12-item survey (see Appendix A) and a postage-paid return envelope. They were asked to complete the survey and return it to the COC.

The survey was focused on the following six areas.

1. Initial contact;
2. Assistance received;
3. Training received;
4. COC responsiveness;
5. MECA involvement; and
6. Strengths, weaknesses, and unanticipated outcomes of the program.

These six areas serve as organizing concepts in the review of responses in the next section. (See Appendix C that relates the six areas to the survey questions.)

As of July 30, 1995, only four (15.4%) surveys had been completed and returned. Thus, the survey was rewritten to a 10-item telephone survey format. During August and September, 1995, using the revised survey, a member of the COC staff surveyed by telephone those employers who had not returned a survey. An additional eight (30.8%) completed surveys were obtained in this way; bringing the total rate to 12 (46.2%).

Findings

Below are presented the main responses of the employers. The complete tabulated responses are presented in Appendix B.

Overview

Readers are reminded that the survey was focused on six categories: initial contact; assistance received; training received; COC responsiveness; MECA involvement; and the strengths, weaknesses, and unanticipated outcomes of the program. They will serve as organizers for this review of the results.

Readers are also reminded that the response rate was 12 (46.2%) of the 26 surveyed employers.

Initial Contact

Five (41.7%) reported that COC initially contacted either them or their company. The remaining seven (58.3%) indicated that either they or their company made the initial contact.

Assistance Received

There were two areas of assistance which the COC was to provide employers: in identifying and training mentors and in developing work-based learning components.

Identifying and Training Mentors. All respondents (12 or 100.0%) indicated that workplace mentors were identified by company staff nine (75.0%) reported that they or someone from their company participated in mentor training. Eight (66.7%) replied that this training was held at the COC, and ten (83.3%) felt that the mentor identification and training their company received was the best type of assistance for them.

Work-Based Learning Component Development. Three (25.0%) respondents reported that a COC instructor visited the worksite and two (16.7%) others reported visits, coordination, and help by COC. One (8.3%) each indicated: mentor, instructor, and administrator assistance with follow-up planned visits and curriculum development; unspecified help from COC instructors; and assistance from the job training administration.

Conversely, one (8.3%) each mentioned: receiving assistance from COC but needed additional assistance to match their program to COC classes; that the components were developed by the company; and that the assistance consisted of direct communication with other employers.

Seven (58.3%) reported that this assistance was provided by COC at the worksite and nine (75.0%) indicated the assistance was the best type for them as an employer.

Training Received

There were two areas of inquiry regarding the training employers received: the availability and impression of the training; and program topics and problems COC has yet to address.

Availability/Impression of Training. All 12 (100.0%) of the respondents confirmed they were invited to participate in inservice activities; most (8 or 66.7%) reported mentor training as the topic.

Four (33.3%) indicated that the inservices were helpful and three (25.0%) did not attend. The reasons given for non-attendance were (1 or 8.3%, each): no additional topics pertinent to the respondent; scheduling problems; and lack of employer interest.

Topics and Problems to Address. Five (41.7%) indicated there were program topics or problems which the COC had not yet addressed; seven (58.3%) indicated there were none.

The topics mentioned (full responses are in Appendix B, Item 5) were:

- Finance of planning;
- Machine repair;
- Standard curriculum;
- Incongruence between COC and work-based activities;
- Work ethics;
- Emphasis on attendance and participation;
- Increased contact with mentors by COC staff; and
- Determining consequences if a student's grades go down.

COC Responsiveness

Eleven (91.7%) of the respondents confirmed that the COC staff responded quickly and/or in a reasonable amount of time; one (8.3%) did not have to be called.

Eleven (91.7%) indicated the responses they received were the best type of responses for them as an employer, and one (8.3%) specified the nature of the problem. (The specific responses are in Appendix B, Item 6b).

MECA Involvement

Eleven (91.7%) reported that they were comfortable with their level of involvement in MECA. One (8.3%) confirmed the need for the program, but indicated time constraints precluded further involvement.

All 12 (100.0%) considered COC's involvement in MECA to be appropriate.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Unanticipated Outcomes

Ten (83.3%) respondents offered descriptions of what they believe to be program strengths:

- Students involved by choice (2)
- Cooperation of school/instructors (2)
- Instructors' industry background
- Administration dedicated to making system work develop skilled workers.
- Try to give students positive goals.
- Want young kids to be part of apprenticeship program.
- Useage of facility
- People at COC - staff counselors, [administrator, instructor] concerned about kids.
- COC's persistence
- Starting to finally get business and education to listen to each other.
- Hands-on learning
- The students gain valuable experience; mentors can share their knowledge/experience; the community involvement is good;
- Helps to strengthen relationship between workplace and school.
- Selection of programs
- No response (2)

Seven (58.3%) described what they believe to be weaknesses and four (33.3%) described unanticipated outcomes of the program. The weaknesses were the following:

- Business doesn't always have time to interact with students as much as employers would like.
- Should have had more than one mentor for substitute.
- Standards should be higher.
- Orientation to world of work.
- Work ethics?
- Student immaturity
- Students need assistance in how to react on the job.
- No measurement system that identifies students' strengths and weaknesses as pertains to business.
- Mentors need to be identified very early in the program and need to attend training.
- No response (5)

Summary

The School District of the City of Saginaw's Averill Career Opportunities Center (COC) created a partnership with business and labor to better prepare students for the world of work. The MECA program (Manufacturing, Engineering, Construction, and Automotive) partnership received funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor and 1994-95 was the initial year of its operation.

Surveys of students, COC staff, and employers were conducted to gauge how well the initial implementation of the program was progressing. (See Appendix A for the instruments used to survey employers.)

This report focuses on employer responses. During June to September, 1995, employers were contacted by mail or telephone; 12 of 26 (46.2%) replied to the survey.

The six focal areas of the survey were (see Appendix C for the area key to survey items):

1. Initial contact;
2. Assistance received;
3. Training received;
4. COC responsiveness;
5. MECA involvement; and
6. Strengths, weaknesses, and unanticipated outcomes of the program.

The major findings are presented below. Tabulated responses to the survey are presented in Appendix B.

- COC initially contacted five (41.7%) employers; seven (58.3%) initially contacted COC.

- With regard to mentor identification and training:

  -- All (12 or 100.0%) reported identification by workplace staff;
  -- Nine (75.0%) reported participation in mentor training; and
  -- Ten (83.3%) considered the assistance provided to be the best type for them as employers.

Unanticipated outcomes:

- Students put more emphasis on money than learning.
- Our union became more aware of the need for students to get experience at the workplace.
- More of the same.
- The ability of the students showed a marked increase from when they started to graduate. Their level of expertise was very high.
- No
- No response (8)

Last, ten (83.3%) offered additional comments. They were the following:

- Continue involvement in academy. If partners continue efforts, it will benefit the entire Saginaw area.
- More parental involvement.
- See consistency between business partners.
- Raise standards.
- Follow rules and regulations.
- Add sheet metal training skills.
- More curriculum (standardize).
- Need work ethics.
- Students need to understand that this is a job.
- Training in how to behave in the workplace.
- Early apptitude testing for career placement.
- The students need to know for what job they were being interviewed.
- Mentors could help with interviewing; we sent supervisors.
- Keep the program focused.
- Advertise to more employers.
- Recruit more students.
- For the first year, we all need to be congratulated! [The project administrator] was very helpful, also - thank you!
- No response (2)

- With regard to workplace learning components assistance:

  -- Three (25.0%) reported COC visits to the workplace;
  -- Two (16.7%) reported both visits and assistance;
  -- Nine (75.0%) indicated that the assistance received was the best type for them as employers; and
  -- Three (25.0%) indicated that the assistance was either incomplete or came from another source.

- With regard to training - topics and problems:

  -- All (12 or 100%) confirmed being offered invitations to training sessions, eight (66.7%) reported mentor training as the topic; and
  -- Five (41.7%) specified problems and/or additional topics, seven (58.3%) did not.

- Eleven (91.7%) considered COC responsiveness to their questions to be quick or reasonable (in length). Eleven (91.7%) also considered the responses they received to be the best for them as employers.

- With regard to MECA involvement:

  -- Eleven (91.7%) considered their involvement to be appropriate; and
  -- All 12 (100.0%) considered COC's involvement to be appropriate.

- There were a wide variety of strengths, weaknesses, and unanticipated outcomes mentioned. However, only two strengths (students participating by choice and cooperation of school/instructors) were mentioned more than once (2 or 16.7%, each).

The reader is reminded that surveys of faculty members and students were also conducted. Those findings are presented in separate, simultaneously produced reports.

Overall, the program has made substantial progress toward its initial set-up aims. However, as of this writing, these aims are not completely met. Readers may wish to review the responses in Appendix B for direction in program enhancement.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYERS SURVEY

Date: _____

Respondent's Title: _____

1. How were you contacted for participation in this program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What, if any, assistance did you receive in identifying and training workplace mentors?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2A. Who provided this assistance?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYERS SURVEY (Cont.)

2B. Was it the best type of assistance for you as an employer?

____ Yes ... If yes, in what way? _____

_____

_____

_____

____ No ... If no, what would have been better? _____

_____

_____

_____

2C. Was this assistance provided at your location or did you come to a training location provided by the program?

____ My location

____ A location provided by the program

3. Have you been invited to participate in any training activities held by the program?

____ Yes ... If yes, what were they? _____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYERS SURVEY (Cont.)

3. (Continued).

If yes ...

Of those you attended, did you find them helpful? _____

_____

_____

_____

Of those you did not attend, why did you miss them? _____

_____

_____

_____

____ No ... If no, are there any training topics you would find valuable?

_____

_____

_____

4. What, if any, assistance did you receive in developing work-based learning components?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYERS SURVEY (Cont.)

4A. Who provided this assistance?

_____

_____

_____

4B. Was it the best type of assistance for you as an employer?

____ Yes ... If yes, in what way? _____

_____

_____

_____

____ No ... If no, what would have been better? _____

_____

_____

_____

4C. Was this assistance provided at your location or did you come to a training location provided by the program?

____ My location

____ A location provided by the program

5. Are there any program topics which COC has not addressed?

____ Yes ... If yes, what are they? _____

_____

_____

_____

____ No

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYERS SURVEY (Cont.)

6. Are there any program problems which COC has not addressed?

____ Yes ... If yes, what are they? _____

_____

_____

_____

____ No

7. Occasionally, it is necessary to call the COC staff for inquiries regarding students and/or program concerns. Of the calls you have made ...

a. About how quickly, on average, were the calls returned?

_____

_____

_____

b. Were they the best type of responses for you as an employer?

____ Yes ... If yes, in what way? _____

_____

_____

_____

____ No ... If no, what would have been better? _____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYERS SURVEY (Cont.)

8. Are you comfortable with your involvement in MECA?

____ Yes ... If yes, what is your current level? _____

_____

_____

_____

____ No ... If no, do you wish to increase or decrease your involvement and in what ways?

_____

_____

_____

9. How would you describe COC's involvement in MECA?

____ Too much ... Why? _____

____ Too little _____

_____

____ Appropriate

10. Is the COC's involvement in MECA inappropriate?

____ Yes ... If yes, what would you suggest to change the level of COC's involvement?

_____

_____

_____

____ No

EMPLOYERS SURVEY (Cont.)

11. Please describe ...

a. Program Strengths.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

b. Program Weaknesses.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

c. Unanticipated outcomes of the program or your participation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. What additional general comments, if any, can be offered to improve or more clearly focus the school-to-work program's efforts?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time and participation.

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES
EMPLOYERS' TELEPHONE SURVEY

Date: _____ **Caller:** _____

Respondent: _____ **Company:** _____

Good Morning (Afternoon). My name is _____ and I am with the Saginaw Public Schools. May I speak with _____?

Is this _____? Good Morning (Afternoon). My name is _____ and I am with the Saginaw Public Schools. We are conducting a follow-up survey of employers who participated in the School-To-Work Program through the Averill Career Opportunities Center. I would like to ask you a few questions. I assure you that any answers you give will be kept confidential.

My first question is ...

1. How were you contacted for participation in this program?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What, if any, assistance did you receive in identifying and training workplace mentors?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2A. Who provided this assistance and was it provided at your location or a location provided by the program?

_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' TELEPHONE SURVEY (Cont.)

2B. Was it the best type of assistance for you as an employer?

____ Yes ... If yes, in what way?

____ No ... If no, what would have been better?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Have you been invited to participate in any training activities held by the program?

____ Yes ... If yes, what were they? _____

_____

_____

____ No ... If no, what training topics would you find valuable?

_____

_____

_____

Of those you attended, did you find them helpful? _____

_____

_____

_____

Of those you did not attend, why did you miss them? _____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES
EMPLOYERS' TELEPHONE SURVEY (Cont.)

4. What, if any, assistance did you receive in developing work-based learning components?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4A. Who provided this assistance and was it provided at your location or a location provided by the program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4B. Was it the best type of assistance for you as an employer?

____ Yes ... If yes, in what way?

____ No ... If no, what would have been better?

_____

_____

_____

_____

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES
EMPLOYERS' TELEPHONE SURVEY (Cont.)

5. Are there any program topics or problems which COC has not addressed?

____ Yes ... If yes, what are they?

____ No

Topics: _____

_____

_____

Problems: _____

_____

_____

6. Occasionally, it is necessary to call the COC staff for inquiries regarding students and/or program concerns. Of the calls you have made ...

a. About how quickly, on average, were the calls returned?

_____

_____

_____

b. Were they the best type of responses for you as an employer?

____ Yes ... If yes, in what way?

____ No ... If no, what would have been better?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES
EMPLOYERS' TELEPHONE SURVEY (Cont.)

7. Are you comfortable with your involvement in MECA?

____ Yes ... If yes, what is your current level?

____ No ... If no, how would you change your involvement?

_____

_____

_____

8. Is the COC's involvement in MECA appropriate or inappropriate?

____ Appropriate

____ Inappropriate

Why? _____

_____

_____

If inappropriate, what would you suggest to change the level of COC's involvement?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX A

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES
EMPLOYERS' TELEPHONE SURVEY (Cont.)

9. Please describe what you believe to be the strengths, weaknesses, and/or unanticipated outcomes of the program.

Strengths.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Weaknesses.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Unanticipated outcomes.

_____

_____

_____

_____

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' TELEPHONE SURVEY (Cont.)

10. What additional suggestions or comments would you like to offer to improve or more clearly focus the School-To-Work program's efforts?

_____

_____

_____

_____

That concludes our survey. May we send to you a copy of a summary of the findings?

____ Yes

____ No

May I verify your address?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time and participation.

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Multiple Responses Were Allowed*)

Date: June - September, 1995

1. How were you contacted for participation in this program?
   - Union representative (2)**
   - Our secretary/treasurer read about the MECA program in the Saginaw News and made the first contact.
   - Contacted by COC staff (5)
   - Plant Manager and Personnel Director
   - In place where I took a job, Saline Management and UAW initiated; [Respondent] called [COC principal].
   - Krumin called COC
   - Salesman with son at center

2. What, if any, assistance did you receive in identifying and training workplace mentors?
   - No identifying - employer choice; mentor attended training (3)
   - Employer chose - MECA trained (3)
   - The officers of our company and each of the supervisors helped to identify mentors; our mentors in the shop did not receive training due to scheduling problems, however our engineer mentor did attend training.
   - [The major appliance repair instructor at COC] answered all questions.]
   - Assistance - went through the mentor training at COC; facilitator training with General Motors.
   - COC provided training three B & P Process Equipment Company employers.
   - Foreman - no training
   - Information provided by COC and MECA members helped us choose our mentors

* Combination of responses from mail and telephone surveys.

** Where more than one respondent gave the same answer, response frequency is in parentheses.

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

2A. Who provided this assistance and was it provided at your location or a location provided by the program?

- COC location/COC staff (8)
- MECA (2)
- As coordinator of the MECA program at Wright K, I attended mentor training; this helped us to identify mentors.
- Mentor training at COC facilitator and leadership through G.M.
- None

2B. Was it the best type of assistance for you as an employer?

	N	%
Yes	10*	76.9
No	2	15.4
No response	1	7.7

... If yes, in what way?

- The mentor training I attended was excellent. It was worth the time.
- As an employer, I don't have the time or background to determine what makes a good mentor.
- Opportunity to bring together the views of business and education in developing what is best for the student.
- Employer wants training so individual builds understanding of what results should be.
- Training best done by COC staff.
- Mentor training well worth it - confidence.
- No other resources.
- Compact - very good.
- Need little more training for mentor and working with young people.
- Saw what was happening at the center; learned from COC staff.

... If no, what would have been better?

- We needed the mentors to attend; they were not identified yet at the time of the training.
- No training received.

---

*One respondent (7.7%) responded Yes and No.

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

3. Have you been invited to participate in any training activities held by the program?

	N	%
Yes	12	100.0
No	0	0.0

... If yes, what were they?

- Mentor training (8)
- Meeting to promote program; help and support kids (3)
- Student evaluation
- I assisted in developing this process from a business perspective.
- No response (1)

Of those you attended, did you find them helpful?

- Yes (3)
- I attended only one; it was very helpful
- Could not attend
- Support kids
- Confidence builder
- Needed employees
- No response (4)

Of those you did not attend, why did you miss them?

- I didn't know of others for me. The shop mentor could not attend due to scheduling.
- Previous engagement
- Lack of time - employer has no interest
- No response (9)

... If no, are there any training topics you would find valuable?'

- No response (12)

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

4. What, if any, assistance did you receive in developing work-based learning components?

- COC instructor visited worksite (3)
- Coordination and help by COC; visiting Flint and Bay City (2)
- Help from job training administration in developing and evaluating programs.
- Mentor, instructor, and administrator; follow-up of plant tours and curriculum development.
- COC instructors
- [Automotive technology cluster instructor at COC] and instructors came to talk to our mentors. The [mechanics/machinist] shop mentors/ supervisors needed more help from COC in setting up their program to go along with COC classes.
- Developed by company
- It was helpful just listening to other employers, and learning how they handled their problems.
- None

4A. Who provided this assistance and was it provided at your location or a location provided by the program?

- COC at worksite (7)
- COC at COC (2)
- Job training administration
- All involved parties
- Mentors
- By visitation of other GM plants with school-to-work program
- UAW mentors at other school-to-work sites. Worked with COC personnel, facility, tools, etc.
- None (2)

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

4B. Was it the best type of assistance for you as an employer?

	N	%
Yes	9	75.0
No	2	16.7
No response	1	8.3

... If yes, in what way?

- [Automotive technology cluster instructor at COC] was very helpful along with [a placement coordinator at COC].
- What has been very helpful is the "call if you need help or have a question".
- Good but will have to improve.
- Partnership developing at B & P and COC.
- Face to face
- No response (4)

... If no, what would have been better?

- None provided (2)

5. Are there any program topics or problems which COC has not addressed?

	N	%
Yes	5	41.7
No	7	58.3

... If yes, what are they?

- Finance of planning
- Need machine repair class
- Very responsive to needs and what B & P's goals are.
- More standardized curriculum needs to take place.

- The machinist supervisor felt that the COC did not follow the scheduled topics. Example: "If we had him on the mill, we would find out that COC had him doing lathe work."
- More emphasis on student attendance. Students need to know. Expected to ask questions.
- Need to teach work ethics.
- Instructors or COC program director could make personal contact with the mentors during the program. Once in the beginning was not enough.
- What if the student's grades fall off after or during the first year of MECA?

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

6. Occasionally, it is necessary to call the COC staff for inquiries regarding students and/or program concerns. Of the calls you have made ...

   a. About how quickly, on average, were the calls returned?

   - The calls were returned on the same or next day. (3)
   - Immediately, if possible (2)
   - Within day/same day (2)
   - Returned above average, no problem
   - Returned within reasonable amount of time, real timely manners.
   - Very responsive
   - Did not have to call.
   - Quickly and sometime several times depending on everyone's schedule.

   b. Were they the best type of responses for you as an employer?

	N	%
Yes	11	91.7
No	0	0.0
No response	1	8.3

   ... If yes, in what way?

   - Problem was solved. (2)
   - COC was always helpful to me as a coordinator.
   - Information on handling students' personal quirks.
   - Follow-up visit provided with student at COC or work site.
   - Absolutely
   - COC assisted in understanding a behavior in another culture.
   - Pretty free hand
   - Only one call, but handled well.
   - No response (2)

   ... If no, what would have been better?

   - However, there was one incident where a student had concerns that were known by COC people. We strongly believe that we should have been notified. It was some time later that we learned of the situation. We would have liked the opportunity to improve the situation/circumstances.

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

7. Are you comfortable with your involvement in MECA?

	N	%
Yes	11	91.7
No	1	8.3

If yes, what is your current level?

- Had student
- Currently does not have student.
- Wants to be involved with more students.
- Two students active in meeting.
- Regard to school participation need more leeway at the plant.
- I serve as coordinator of the MECA program and help identify mentors and do follow-up with mentors and students and attended mentor meetings. I was happy to be involved.
- Member
- Have attended meetings on occasion, but because of business commitments, could not become more involved.
- High ... as compared to high-medium-low.
- No response (2)

If no, how would you change your involvement?

- Personally, no time. Feel the need for the program but no extra time. (1)

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

8. Is the COC's involvement in MECA appropriate or inappropriate?

	N	%
Appropriate	12	100.0
Inappropriate	0	0.0

Why?

- COC just visited for school-to-work based on curriculum and work experience. COC sense of better relationship with real work world.
- Employer relies on COC as experts and feel they are getting good guidance as needed.
- Because of the cooperation that the school has given.
- Developing kids that need help and provides opportunity.
- Stick-to-tiveness" in keeping the employer involved.
- Trade school a natural fit.
- Ties education and business together.
- Training helpful in work place.
- There is great concern shown to make this program work.
- Might want to consider more instructor involvement in the steering committee.
- No response (2)

If inappropriate, what would you suggest to change the level of COC's involvement?

- No response (12)

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

9. Please describe what you believe to be the strengths, weaknesses, and/or unanticipated outcomes of the program.

Strengths:

- Students involved by choice (2)
- Cooperation of school/instructors (2)
- Instructors' industry background
- Administration dedicated to making system work develop skilled workers.
- Try to give students positive goals
- Want young kids to be part of apprenticeship program.
- Useage of facility.
- People at COC - staff counselors, [administrator, instructor] concerned about kids.
- COC's persistance
- Starting to finally get business and education to listen to each other.
- Hands-on learning
- The students gain valuable experience; mentors can share their knowledge/ experience; the community involvement is good;
- Helps to strengthen relationship between workplace and school.
- Selection of programs.
- No response (2)

Weaknesses:

- Business doesn't always have time to interact with students as much as employer would like.
- Should have had more than one mentor for substitute.
- Standards should be higher.
- Orientation to world of work.
- Work ethics?
- Student immaturity
- Students need assistance in how to react on job.
- No measurement system that identifies students' strengths and weaknesses as pertains to business.
- Mentors need to be identified very early in the program and need to attend training.
- No response (5)

APPENDIX B

1994-95 SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS' SURVEY (N = 12) (Cont.)

9. (Continued)

Unanticipated outcomes.

- Students put more emphasis of money than learning.
- Our union became more aware of the need for students to get experience at the workplace.
- More of the same
- The ability of the students showed a marked increase from when they started to graduation. Their level of expertise was very high.
- No
- No response (8)

10. What additional suggestions or comments would you like to offer to improve or more clearly focus the School-To-Work program's efforts?

- Continue involvement in academy. If partners continue efforts, it will benefit the entire Saginaw area.
- More parental involvement.
- See consistency between business partners.
- Raise standards
- Follow rules and regulations
- Add sheet metal training skills
- More curriculum (standardize)
- Need work ethics
- Students need to understand that this is a job.
- Training in how to behave in workplace.
- Early apptitude testing for career placement.
- The students need to know for what job they were being interviewed.
- Mentors could help with interviewing; we sent supervisors.
- Keep the program focused.
- Advertise to more employers.
- Recruit more students
- For the first year - we all need to be congratulated! [The project administrator] was very helpful, also - thank you!
- No response (2)

May we send you a copy of the summary of the findings?

	N	%
Yes	5	41.7
No	0	0.0
No response	7	58.3

APPENDIX C

FOCAL AREAS TO SURVEY ITEMS KEY

Area	Survey Item(s)
Initial contact	1
Assistance received	2, 2a, 2b, 2c, 4, 4a, 4b, 4c
Training received	3, 5, 6
COC responsiveness	7
MECA involvement	8, 9, 10
Strengths, weaknesses, and unanticipated outcomes of the program	11, 12